Scoil Angela

Anti-Bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Scoil Angela has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

a) **A positive school culture and climate which**

- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

b) **Effective leadership**

c) **A school-wide approach**

d) **A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact**

e) **Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures)**

- that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
- explicitly addresses the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying;
- ensure effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

g) Supports for staff

h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow-up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and

i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

3.In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- Deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- Cyber-bullying and
- Identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special education needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

Examples of bullying behaviours……See Appendix A

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are:

Ms Molony (Principal)

Mrs O'Dwyer Ryan (Deputy Principal)

Ms Kirby (Assistant Principal)

All Class Teachers

All Support Teachers

5. School Policy for the prevention of Bullying

- We have a whole school approach to prevent bullying where everybody in our school community is responsible for its prevention.
- We strive to create a school atmosphere in which children feel safe and secure, knowing that they will be listened to and encouraged to report incidents of bullying behaviour. We have Friendship week, participate in Helping Hands Anti-Bullying Programme with Maria Garvey, have regular school assemblies and an active Student Council.
- We encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly
- We allocate time in class to the subject, outlining the unacceptability of bullying and the type of atmosphere we desire to foster in our school.
- Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class
  - o Hand note up with homework
  - o Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school
  - o Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) to tell on your behalf
  - o Administer a confidential questionnaire annually to all pupils
  - o Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place
  - o Worry Box
  - o We use the relevant lessons in the Stay Safe programme, Walk Tall programme, SPHE curriculum, and Webwise.

- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardians to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to internet within the school is strictly monitored.
- Mobile phone policy – no phones allowed in school.

Some or all of these characteristics may be indicators of a child who bullies;

- A bully may be male or female.
- A bully may be one who is bullied at home, on the street or at school.
- A bully may be found amongst children from an early age.
- A bully may be exposed to physical or psychological forms of aggression.
- A bully may often use a third party to carry out the bullying.
- Some bullies are quick to provoke the antagonism of others-tease, taunt, -and then are quick to complain of others behaving similarly.
- A bully may often be physically stronger than others, may be aggressive and may enjoy conflict.
- A bully may feel neglected or over-looked at home or at school.
- A bully may have learning difficulties and may have a negative attitude to teachers or to authority.
- A bully may have low self-esteem and may try to compensate for this through his/her bullying behaviour.
- A bully may be one who is under pressure to succeed at all costs.
- A bully may be none of the above.

Definition of a Victim of Bullying

A victim of bullying is a person who suffers repeated uninvited attention of another, or others, or, who suffers as a result of being excluded or isolated by another or others.

How to Recognise a Victim of Bullying

A victim may be a person perceived to be different from his/her peers.

- A victim may be a child who is over-protected.
- A victim may be low in self-esteem.
- A victim may be lacking in basic social skills and coping skills.
- A victim may be hypersensitive.
- A victim may be subjected to bullying because of his/her academic achievements.
- A victim may be a low achiever or a high achiever.

- A victim may be none of the above.

Recognising a Victim of Bullying

At School

- Deterioration in educational performance
- Loses interest and enthusiasm for school
- Visible signs of anxiety/stress
- Possessions missing
- Unexplained bruises, injuries or torn clothes
- Are picked on, belittled, or sneered at
- Are (often) alone and excluded from peer group
- Frequent minor illnesses, especially headaches and tummy aches

At Home

- Unwillingness to go to school
- Anxiety about travelling to or from school
- Unexplained changes of mood or behaviour. This will often occur before the restart of school, e.g. end of weekend, end of holidays.
- Frequent minor illnesses often accompanying the mood changes mentioned above.
- May begin to bully other children in the family.
- Increased request for money.
- Unexplained bruising, injuries, cuts, scratches.
- Reluctance to say what is troubling him/her.
- Give improbable excuses to explain any of the above.

6. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationship of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame)

a) **Reporting bullying behaviour**

- Any pupil or parent(s)/Guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretaker must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher

b) **Investigating and dealing with incidents:**
- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant) teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved in line with the Child Safeguarding Statement.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned in an appropriate setting. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s);
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the support being provided to the pupils;

- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, that it is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;

c) **Follow up and recording**

- All incidences deemed to be of bullying nature, should be documented in the relevant incident copy.
- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
  - ➢ *Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased*
  - ➢ *Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;*
  - ➢ *Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable;*
  - ➢ *Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal*

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable
- Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints' procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

d) <u>Recording of bullying behaviour</u>

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents be done in an objective and factual manner.

Scoil Angela's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal pre-determination that bullying has occurred.

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them, either in the incident copy. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.

Formal Stage 1 -determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records in a bullying incident book which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- All information with regards to incidences that may occur prior to the identification of bullying must be recorded in the Incident book where relevant information can be used to determine whether an incident of bullying has or has not occurred.

Formal Stage 2-Appendix 3 (From DES Procedures)

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix B** to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances;

a) In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and

b) Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable e.g. cyber bullying, sexual bullying. Identity based bullying.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at **Appendix B** must be completed in full and kept in a specific folder in the Principal's office.

Established intervention strategies

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- No Blame Approach
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given
- Question/Worry Box
- Sticks and Stones
- Community Garda talk to 5th/6th class pupils about bullying and cyber-bullying as part of An Garda Siochana's Schools Programme

7. *Scoil Angela's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:*

- All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
  - Buddy / Peer mentoring system / Playground Pals
  - Prefect System
  - Group work such as circle time.
  - Social Stories in small groups.

- If pupils require counselling of further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies, e.g., NEPS, Barnardos, to organise same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour
- Continuous support and advice will be required for the child who is engaging in bullying behaviour.

- Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.

> **Referral of Serious Cases to the H.S.E.**
>
> In relation to bullying in schools, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Children First Act 2015 provide that in situations where "the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult TUSLA with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan"
>
> In line with the Child Safeguarding Statement, serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, be referred to TUSLA and/or Gardaí as appropriate.
>
> The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the TUSLA, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the TUSLA.

8. Supervision and Monitoring of pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible

a) Teachers and 3 SNAs on duty – Sos Break
   Teachers and 3 SNAs on duty – Lunchtime

   Supervision by teachers and SNAs in line with the Child Safeguarding Statement.

b) Yard is zoned into class groups to eliminate bullying danger spots

c) Senior Classes (2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th) go to basketball courts, with 2 supervising adults to eliminate large numbers in yard.

d) Monitoring of corridors, classrooms, halla, swimming, school games, training and school tours.

e) Scoil Angela has an Acceptable Internet Usage policy in place. School broadband is protected by Net Nanny.

f) Scoil Angela has a zero tolerance of using mobile phones during school hours or on school grounds before or after school.

9. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the travelling community. Children of other Religious beliefs will be accommodated discretely either by early collection or supervision in an alternative room for the duration of religious as identified in the Child Safeguarding Statement.

a) The Anti-Bullying policy was initially adopted by the Board of Management on June 10, 2014. This policy was built upon the previous one.

b) This policy has been made available to school personnel, is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

c) This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management annually. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent's Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

10. Dignity in the Workplace.

All school personnel are expected to abide by the 'Dignity in the Workplace' charter, to be a good example to children and to be

professional in their dealings with all school personnel. In this way, we try to promote respectful relationships across the school community, by being aware of voice, tone, abruptness, body language, sarcasm etc.

Adult bullying of a child
All complaints against a teacher are handled under the agreed INTO/CPSMA Complaints Procedure. A copy of this may be obtained from the school office at any time.

Parent bullying of a teacher
School Staff are entitled to work in a safe professional environment free from harassment of any kind, including but not limited to verbal, written, cyber or physical bullying. Parents are reminded to make a formal appointment if they wish to discuss an issue.

Catherine Reynolds (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Bridann Molony (Principal)

Date; 5th April, 2022

Date of next review – April 2023

Appendix A. Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying	• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The "look" • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed
Cyber	• **Denigration:** Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation • **Harassment:** Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • **Impersonation:** Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name • **Flaming:** Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • **Trickery:** Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • **Outing:** Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • **Exclusion:** Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • **Cyber stalking:** ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Face-book/Ask.fm/Twitter/You Tube/Instagram/Snapchat or on games consoles

	• Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
Identity Based Behaviours **Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation** (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community)	
Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian…. used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look" • Use of terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs

	- Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying - Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and capacity to understand social situations and social cues - Mimicking a person's disability - Setting others up for ridicule

APPENDIX B

1. **Name of pupil being bullied and class group**

Name_____Class_____

2. **Names(s) and Class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour**

_____

_____

3. **Source of bullying concern/report**

Tick relevant box(es)

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	

4. **Location of incidents**

Tick relevant box(es)

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other	

5 **Name of person(s) who reported** the bullying concern

6 **Type** of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(s)

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

7 **Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category**

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. **Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

9. **Details of actions taken**

Signed_____ (Relevant Teacher   Date_____

Date submitted to Principal_____